

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claim 1. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus for cleaning and sterilizing the inside of a chamber [(1)], comprising:

a supply [(2)] of sterilizing liquid for [this] the chamber [(1)]; and,

means for inducing, within this sterilizing liquid, variations in pressure, amplitude and frequency, and in [the] a gradient of said variations, said means being adapted to generate cavitation within this liquid, [characterized in that] said means for inducing variations in pressure [comprise] comprising a liquid column between said chamber and a switching member [(10)] with which said chamber [(1)] can be connected cyclically to a negative pressure [(7)], the value of the latter being in relation to said amplitude or respectively to the atmospheric pressure.

Claim 2. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus according to Claim 1, [characterized in that it comprises] comprising:

a main conduit [(4)] connecting said switching member to said treatment chamber [(1)], two conduits [(5, 6)] connecting said main conduit [(4)] to the atmospheric pressure and to said negative pressure, respectively, said switching member [(10)] comprising connecting passages [(10b, 10c)] between said conduits [(5, 6)] and said main conduit [(4)] and being movable between at least two positions, one in which one of said connecting passages [(10b)] brings the main conduit [(4)] into communication with the atmosphere, the other in which the other of said passages [(10c)] brings the main conduit into communication with said negative pressure, and drive means for displacing said switching member from one position to the other [and vice versa].

Claim 3. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus according to Claim 2, [characterized in that] wherein said switching member is a rotary member and is integral in kinematic terms with the output shaft of a drive motor.

Claim 4. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus according to [one of the preceding claims] Claim 1, [characterized in that it comprises] comprising:

an endpiece [(15)] intended to connect said treatment chamber [(1, 1')] on the one hand to said switching member [(3)] and on the other hand to said supply [(2)] of sterilizing liquid.

Claim 5. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus according to Claim 4, [characterized in that a] wherein a second flexible connection element [(15)] connected in a leaktight and removable manner to said endpiece [(15)] is arranged between said switching member and said treatment chamber [(1)].

Claim 6. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus according [to one of the preceding claims] Claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein said treatment chamber [(1')] is made up of two parts [(1'a, 1'b)] which are joined to each other in a removable and leaktight manner.

Claim 7. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus according to one of Claim[s] 1 [to 4], [characterized in that] wherein said chamber [(1'')] is made up of a tubular element [(16)], one end of which is open to receive the working part of an endoscope [(E)], the inside of [this] said chamber [(1'')] being connected on the one hand to said switching member [(3)] by way of a joining piece [(24)] and [on the other hand] to said supply of sterilizing liquid via the inlet channel [(25)] for the biopsy forceps of said endoscope [(E)].

Claim 8. (Amended) [Device] Apparatus according to Claim 7, [characterized in that] wherein said tubular chamber [(1'')] includes a tubular element [(16)] which is open at both its ends, each of [them] said ends being sealingly engaged in [an] a respective annular groove [(17, 18) of] in two respective closure members [(21, 22)], with interposition of a sealing joint [(19, 20)].